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Eminem 'Went Crazy' With Tupac's A Cappellas For Loyal To The Game

Slim Shady says as longtime Tupac fan, he feels 'his music, his persona, his everything.'

By Shaheem Reid

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Tupac Shakur has always meant different things to different people. But if you ask anyone who knew him personally or followed his career, they'll all agree he was compelling, if nothing else.

Eminem, for one, was so moved by Pac that he approached Shakur's mother, Afeni, and asked to work on the deceased icon's next posthumous album, *Loyal to the Game.*

"I wrote to Afeni and said, 'Please consider letting me produce this album,' " he told MTV News a few weeks ago in Detroit. "I just feel, as a longtime fan of Tupac ... his music, his persona, his everything. To be able to produce one or two tracks is a dream. So I just basically dropped a little note to her letting her know what her son meant to me as well as a lot of other people in the industry. She gave me the blessing, she gave me the green light and I was like, 'Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity.' "

Eminem produced tracks for the "Tupac: Resurrection" soundtrack last year (most notably "Runnin' (Dying to Live)," which also featured the Notorious B.I.G.) and ended up providing beats for 13 tracks on *Loyal to the Game*. The first single is "Thugs Get Lonely Too," featuring Nate Dogg (see [article id="1493495"]" 'Thugs Get Lonely Too,' Tupac Says On Eminem-Produced Track"[/article]).

"I was given some Tupac a cappellas and just went crazy with them," Slim Shady said. "It's been a longtime dream for me to be able to get to a level of being able to produce not only other artists, but somebody that I looked up to in general. People will see when it comes out. It is what it is, I'm bumping it right now."

During recent weeks, more and more of the album -- including the title track featuring the G-Unit, and "Po N---a Blues," which has a guest spot from Jadakiss -- has leaked to the streets. Much to the chagrin of his mother's company, Amaru Entertainment, Tupac's entire LP was just illegally pirated and can now be found on the Internet.

Amaru released a statement admonishing the bootlegging with the hope of dissuading fans from downloading. "The reality of today's music industry is that Internet piracy and bootlegging run rampant like a plague," the statement read. "Tupac had always said that he could not do any of this without his fans and today is no different. It's your undying loyalty to Tupac and your undying devotion to carrying out his legacy in a respectful manner that gave us enough warning to take measures to ensure an early release of our album."

As of right now, *Loyal to the Game* still has a release date of December 14, according to Interscope. Afeni Shakur plans on using a portion of the proceeds to build a Tupac Amaru Shakur center for the arts in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

For a full-length feature on Eminem, check out [article id="1493854"]"Eminem: Embattled But Not Embittered."[/article]